THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHIL-MALAI): (a) The CGHS dispensary at Gurgaon has the necessary complement of staff including doctors as per the patient load.

(b) and (c) Question docs not yet arise.

Target for Rice-Procurement

"190 PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA:
SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for rice-procure ment for the current year;

(b) the estimated production of rice for the current year;

(c) whether the target fixed for rice-procurement would be achieved; and

(d) if not the steps proposed to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CONSUM-ER AFFAIRS (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) The procurement of paddy under price support scheme is purely voluntary in nature, as only the paddy offered by the farmers can be procured. Similarly the collection of rice under levy scheme, also depends on the purchase of paddy made by the millers. Hence, no targets arc fixed for procure-ment of rice.

(b) The estimated production of rice during the Kharif Sowing Season 1998-99 is likely to be 70.75 million tonnes. The Rabi Sowing Season is in progress and it is curly to estimate likely production of rice of Rabi / Summer crop. As such, no estimates of likely production or rice during the vcar 1998-99 has been made so far.

(c) Docs not arise due to reply at (a) above. However, a quantity'of 47.02 lakh tonnes of rice has been procured for Central Pool as on 8.12.1998 in the current Kharif Marketing Season 1998-99. (d) Docs not arise.

Development of Leprosy vaccine

*191 SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a leprosy vaccine has been developed by the National Institute of Immunology;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when it is likely to be available to patients, alongwith its cost in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) to (c) An anti-leprosy vaccine based on Mycobacterium was an im-munothcraspeutic agent to be used alongwith the Multi-Drug Therapy (MDT) regime, has been developed by the National Institute of Immunology, New Delhi. The Institute has conducted clinical trials to study its immunotheraupcutic and immunop-rophylactic effect in leprosy patients. The followup of the immunoprophy-lac trials volunteer is still being carried out. The question of making available this vaccine to the patients in the country alongwith its cost will arise only after its successful trials. However, currently, Multi Drug Therapy is being given for six months in Paueibacillary leprosy cases and 12 months in Multibacillary patients. This regime is very potent and sufficient to cure the leprosy patients when given for the prescribed period.